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Letter dated 7 May 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter addressed to you from Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Fesseha A. **Tessema**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 7 May 2001 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

It is with deep regret that I am compelled to write to you expressing my deep concern and, in fact, apprehension, over how the situation with regard to the implementation of the Peace Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea has been developing. I am specifically referring to the implementation of the Algiers Agreement of 18 June 2000.

Truly speaking, we would be even more concerned, to the point of being alarmed, if the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the United Nations were not to be as troubled as we are. The reason is obvious. Eritrea is at present violating the Algiers Agreement of June 2000. This cannot be unknown to UNMEE and to the United Nations.

It is with little reservation that I can state that we, for our part, have always cooperated fully with UNMEE. We have done that with full appreciation that we should do so, not merely with the view to helping UNMEE per se, but to make it possible for UNMEE to help us, as well as the people of Eritrea. This was also the spirit with which we have welcomed the announcement of the establishment of the Temporary Security Zone.

The Temporary Security Zone is designed primarily to help separate the two forces. This is precisely what Eritrea is making it impossible for UNMEE to achieve. What we have been witnessing for some time now is that Eritrea is reintroducing its troops under the guise of militia. This is in direct contravention of the Algiers Agreement of June 2000. Eritrea is bringing its troops back into the Temporary Security Zone, lock, stock and barrel, including senior officers. Accordingly, Eritrea is violating the Algiers Agreement in a blatant manner and in a way that will make separation of forces a nearly impossible task at present. This lack of compliance by Eritrea has the consequence of making the Temporary Security Zone tenuous and the whole situation on the ground potentially dangerous. As much as Ethiopia wishes to contribute to an effective implementation of the objectives of the Temporary Security Zone, smooth progress towards this end is being hampered by Eritrea's unwillingness to cooperate in the realization of this objective.

This is not the first time that Eritrea has been an obstacle to peace and to progress towards achieving it. At no time since the onset of the crisis between the two countries has Eritrea cooperated in good faith with those who have tried to help the two countries achieve peace. It is always under duress that Eritrea has ever shown flexibility. This is what took place both in February and June 1999. It is the same thing that Eritrea did in June 2000 when it agreed to accept the Algiers Agreement. I refer to all these instances because I believe that it is necessary for us all to draw the appropriate lessons from the experience we have had in this crisis. Eritrea is unlikely to adhere to the provisions of the Algiers Agreement unless it is reminded of its obligations in a clear and unambiguous manner. Reminding both parties, as is usually done, to do this and that is not going to help. Fudging the issues involved is not going to advance the cause of peace. What will advance the cause of peace is to call a spade a spade. Eritrea is obstructing progress towards peace. It is

creating a dangerous situation, which is not necessary and which can only be avoided by the Security Council taking a clear and principled position.

What we call on the Security Council to do is to help us move towards peace by making it clear to Eritrea that its lack of compliance with the Algiers Agreement cannot be tolerated by the Council and by the United Nations.

I would like to assure you that, for our part, we shall continue to be second to none in our practical commitment to assisting UNMEE in the discharge of its responsibilities. We have never failed to fulfil our obligations. We withdrew our troops to their May 1998 position well before the deadline, in a scrupulous manner. That is where our troops are today. We have done this in good faith and in accordance with what is provided for in the Algiers Agreement of June 2000. We do believe that we have no dispute on this with UNMEE as we have no major problems with it with respect to any aspect of Ethiopia's compliance with the provisions of the Algiers Agreement. We have also signed the Status-of-Forces Agreement with UNMEE in good time. In general, we have shown, in terms of practical commitment, our readiness to cooperate with UNMEE in full. This is not the case with Eritrea. Eritrea appears to be resolved to ensure that UNMEE does not succeed. It is in the light of the foregoing that I thought that I should draw your attention to this serious potential danger faced by UNMEE and by the peace process. It is only your principled intervention and that of the Security Council that could make a difference and assist us in protecting the peace process from derailment.

(*Signed*) Seyoum **Mesfin**
Minister for Foreign Affairs